

Notes

In Western music the octave is divided in 12 small and equal intervals, called **semitones**. A whole tone is equal to two semitones. On the guitar, each fret corresponds to one semitone. One octave therefore corresponds to 12 frets. The 7 basic notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B are not equally spaced. In some cases it is a semitone away (i.e. next note) and in some cases it is two semitones away (i.e. 2 notes).

Because there are 12 notes in the octave, but only 7 notes names, we need flats and sharps called **accidentals** to identify all possible notes. A note without accidentals is called “**natural**”. E.g. “C” means neither flat nor sharp. An easy way to remember it is, # means forward or higher in pitch and \flat means backward or lower in pitch. So, if you are playing the note called “A” and move a semitone forward or higher in pitch, the new note will be A#. Similarly, if you take a step back or lower in pitch, the new note will be A \flat .

Symbols for Accidentals



Sharp



Flat



Natural

A standard rule to remember is, there are no sharp or flat notes between B and C, E and F.

If we go by accidentals, you will notice that moving a step forward from C makes it C# but the same note can also be called D \flat if you go a step back from the note D. This is called an **enharmonic** note. Hence enharmonic notes are notes that have the same pitch but have different note spellings.

C | C#D \flat | D | D#E \flat | E | F | F#G \flat | G | G#A \flat | A | A#B \flat | B | C